

CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE  
ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Friday, 24 January 1964, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Ato Abate AGEDE

(Ethiopia)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. J. de CASTRO

Mr. E. HCSANNAH

Bulgaria:

Mr. K. LUKANOV

Mr. G. GULLEV

Mr. D. TEMOV

Mr. V. IZMIRLIEV

Burma:

Mr. James BARRINGTON

U SAIN BWA

U MAUNG MAUNG GYI

U HTOON SHEIN

Canada:

Mr. E.L.M. BURNS

Mr. S.P. RAE

Mr. A.E. GUTLIEB

Mr. R.M. TAIT

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. L. SIMOVIC

Mr. M. ZEMLA

Mr. F. LAHODA

Mr. V. VAJNAR

Ethiopia:

Ato Abate AGEDE

Ato S. TEFERHA

India:

Mr. R.K. MEHRU

Mr. A.S. MEHTA

Mr. K. KRISHNA RAO

Mr. K. NARENDRA NATH

Italy:

Mr. F. CAVALLETTI

Mr. E. GUIDOTTI

Mr. S. AVETTA

Mr. G.F. TOZZOLI

PRESENT AT THE TABLE (Cont'd)

Mexico:

Mr. Ernesto de SANTIAGO  
Mr. Manuel TELLO  
Miss Ofelia REYES-RETANA

Nigeria:

Mr. L.C.N. OBI

Poland:

Mr. M. BLUSZTAJN  
Mr. E. STANIEWSKI  
Mr. J. GOLDBLAT  
Mr. H. SOKALSKI

Romania:

Mr. V. DUMITRESCU  
Mr. E. GLASER  
Mr. N. ECOBESCU  
Mr. C. UNGUREANU

Sweden:

Mrs. A. MYRDAL  
Mr. P. HAMMARSKJOLD  
Mr. C.G. EKLUND  
Mr. J. PRANTZ

Union of Soviet Socialist  
Republics:

Mr. S.K. TSARAPKIN  
Mr. A.A. ROSCHIN  
Mr. I.G. USACHEV  
Mr. V.V. SHUSTOV

United Arab Republic:

Mr. H. ISMAIL  
Mr. AHMED OSMAN  
Mr. M. KASSEM  
Mr. S.E. IBRAHIM

PRESENT AT THE TABLE (Cont'd)

United Kingdom:

Mr. Peter THOMAS  
Sir Paul MASON  
Mr. J.G. TAHOURDIN  
Mr. A.J. WILLIAMS

United States of America:

Mr. W.C. FOSTER  
Mr. A.L. RICHARDS  
Mr. D.S. MACDONALD  
Mr. R.A. MARTIN

Special Representative of the  
Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

Deputy Special Representative  
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

The CHAIRMAN (Ethiopia): I declare open the one hundred and fifty-ninth meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

Mr. DUMITRESCU (Romania)(translation from French): Speaking in this Committee for the first time as the representative of the Romanian People's Republic, may I be allowed to thank Mr. Burns, the representative of Canada, who took the chair at the first meeting of this session, as well as our co-Chairmen and other representatives, for their words of welcome? This is a further incentive to me and to the Romanian delegation as a whole to join with all the other delegations in performing the noble task with which we have been entrusted.

I should also like to take the opportunity of thanking the Secretary-General of the United Nations, U Thant, for the encouraging message he sent us through his Special Representative, Mr. Protitch (ENDC/PV.157, p.5), in which he rightly points out that the resolutions adopted at the eighteenth session of the General Assembly on the subject of disarmament impose upon all Member States, including the members of this Committee, a continuing responsibility to implement them. The Romanian delegation shares this view of our Committee's role and is conscious of the responsibilities incumbent on it.

The Romanian delegation wishes to convey its condolence and sympathy to the United States delegation on the tragic death of President Kennedy, an outstanding statesman who greatly contributed to the search for the peaceful settlement of a number of thorny international problems and possessed a realistic understanding of the need to arrive at reasonable solutions in order to avert a thermonuclear war. My delegation listened with great interest to President Johnson's statement (ENDC/120), communicated to the Committee by the United States representative, to the effect that this policy will be continued.

As the Chairman of the Council of State of the Romanian People's Republic, Mr. Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, pointed out at the beginning of this year, the main feature of the past year was

(Mr. Dumitrescu, Romania)

"... a more vigorous affirmation of the principles of peaceful co-existence between States with different social systems, the creation of a more favourable climate for the lessening of international tension, and the promotion of multilateral relations between all countries."

The Moscow Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water (ENDC/100/Rev.1) was an effective step in this direction. Other important agreements were also reached: for example, that embodied in the resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly prohibiting the placing in orbit of any objects carrying nuclear weapons (A/RES/1884(XVIII); ENDC/117), and the establishment of a direct communications link between Moscow and Washington (ENDC/97).

Four other important resolutions concerning disarmament have also been adopted by the General Assembly (ENDC/116, 117), and we must remember too in this connexion what has been accomplished towards putting an end to the cold war.

As other speakers have pointed out, all these are gains to which the Committee has contributed. Certainly, the progress so far made is not as great as we might have hoped, but it demonstrates the efficacy of negotiation where international problems are concerned, and the possibility of thereby arriving at mutually-acceptable solutions consistent with the interests of all parties and the cause of peace and without a victor or a vanquished.

The Romanian delegation has always believed that we must be patient, persevering, responsible and realistic if we are to solve the many problems which confront us, and that we must seek ways of reconciling points of view in a spirit of understanding and co-operation. That is the method which has enabled us to achieve the progress already gained, and we must continue to use it in the future.

The fact that this session of our Conference is being resumed in what is universally regarded as a better atmosphere is of good augury, but enhances our obligation to make every effort to achieve success in our task. We have many and complex tasks to perform, but they should all converge towards our supreme object, that of ensuring a lasting peace -- the inalienable prerogative of every State and every people.

(Mr. Dumitrescu, Romania)

It goes without saying that peace cannot be based on the armaments race and the cold war. It must be founded on the abolition of armaments and the promotion of confidence between peoples and States. That is why mankind's aspirations for peace should take tangible shape in positive measures which our Committee is called upon to elaborate, and the most important of which is the preparation of a treaty on general and complete disarmament.

Obviously general and complete disarmament cannot be effected at a blow, and will entail an extremely complicated process. My delegation welcomes the new constructive proposals recently submitted in this regard, which take into account the views of the parties concerned and could give an impetus to the negotiations for an agreement.

I have in mind primarily the proposal put forward at the eighteenth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations by the Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr. Gromyko (A/PV.1208, provisional, p.71), concerning the retention by the Soviet Union and the United States of America of a limited number of intercontinental missiles, anti-missile missiles and ground-to-air missiles, not only until the end of the second stage but until the third stage of the disarmament process. In our opinion this initiative makes it easier to accommodate points of view and bring about agreement on nuclear disarmament.

There are other spheres too in which there appears to be a better chance of reaching agreement. I refer in particular to a reduction in the armed forces of the principal military Powers and in conventional armaments.

While striving unremittingly for general and complete disarmament as the main objective, the Romanian People's Republic also supports partial or regional measures which will strengthen confidence between States, reduce the danger of military conflict, and eliminate certain differences or foci of tension, thus paving the way for the creation of a world without weapons and without war.

In this connexion, my delegation approves of the method that is being increasingly practised by the Great Powers and which may be described as "the method of positive mutual example". We refer here to cuts in military budgets, reductions in armed forces, and other similar measures. Such measures testify to a growth in mutual confidence between States, and at the same time help to promote that confidence and to reduce international tension.

(Mr. Dumitrescu, Romania)

As one of the problems of particular urgency that must be tackled, the Romanian delegation would like to make special mention of the need to prevent the dissemination of nuclear weapons. Agreement on that matter would further the cause of peace by preventing a continually-growing number of countries from possessing atomic weapons, and would thereby diminish the danger of a world war. At the same time the Romanian delegation considers that the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between signatory States of the Warsaw Treaty and NATO countries would be of great significance as a transitional step towards the liquidation of military blocs.

The idea of creating denuclearized zones in different regions of the world is gaining ground, as demonstrated by the discussions at the eighteenth session of the General Assembly and many statements heard by the Committee. Mounting interest in this idea shows how great is the general desire to remove the nuclear danger.

The Romanian People's Republic regards it as a duty to play its proper part in strengthening peace, and first and foremost in establishing good relations in its own area. With these considerations in mind the Romanian Government submitted to other Balkan governments in 1957 and 1959 proposals for a multilateral inter-Balkan agreement and treaty so as to form in the Balkans a zone of peace and co-operation free from nuclear weapons or vehicles for their delivery. These proposals have been endorsed by certain Balkan States and have met with a wide public response, which proves that the Romanian initiative is both timely and relevant.

Many other States have submitted proposals for the establishment of such zones in central (ENDC/C.1/1) and northern (DC/201/Add.2, p.70) Europe, in the Mediterranean region (ENDC/91), in Latin America (A/RES/1911(XVIII); ENDC/87), and in Africa (A/RES/167(XVI); ENDC/93/Rev.1), and others. As far as Europe is concerned, if such proposals were put into effect there would be a system of denuclearized zones stretching right across the continent. Such a system would allow us to establish good neighbourly relations and normal co-operation between States, and at the same time would exclude vast areas of the world from the armaments race, thus promoting the lessening of tension.



(Mr. Dumitrescu, Romania)

In view of this situation, the Romanian Government has asked for the inclusion once more of an item on the General Assembly's agenda entitled: "Actions on the regional level with a view to improving good neighbourly relations among European States having different social and political systems". The response to this proposal testifies that regional agreements between States having different social and political systems are a necessity of international life.

As far as we are concerned we shall do everything in our power to secure the adoption of positive measures and their execution. Proposals have already been submitted to the Committee at its present session, and we are confident that they will be examined with the requisite care in order to bring out those elements which will further our essential purpose, the achievement of general and complete disarmament.

The Romanian delegation would welcome any other proposal, initiative or move, whatever its source, that is calculated to lessen international tension further, and that would contribute towards the peaceful solution of major international problems.

Mr. OBI (Nigeria): Mr. Chairman, permit me first of all to extend to you a most hearty welcome. I have no doubt that you will make very useful contributions to our work, and my delegation looks forward to that great co-operation which has always characterized the relationship of our respective delegations.

I should also like to extend, through you, a no less hearty welcome to the representatives of India, Mexico and Romania who are also joining us for the first time. We have no doubt that they will continue the excellent work of their predecessors in making positive contributions to our work.

My delegation is also happy to welcome back to our midst Mr. Foster of the United States delegation and Mr. Naszkowski, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland. We trust that their stay with us will be longer than hitherto and equally rewarding.

(Mr. Obi, Nigeria)

I should also like to express the deep sense of loss which my delegation feels at the dastardly assassination of President Kennedy. As Mr. Foster said on 21 January (ENDC/FV.157, p.8), we have suffered a grievous loss in the assassination of a leader whose vision and determination led to the achievement of so much in so short a time. We have noted with satisfaction that President Johnson has pledged himself to continue the most valuable work of his great predecessor, and we wish the new President God's guidance in his high office.

The Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament has resumed its work after a lengthy, but most fruitful, deliberation on disarmament and related measures at the United Nations General Assembly. My delegation has always attached the utmost importance to the discussions in the General Assembly, for it is firmly convinced that the issues of peace and security, and in particular the tasks with which our Committee is charged, are the responsibility of all mankind and the monopoly of none. Consequently, in the discharge of this responsibility, the wisdom and direction of the world community as expressed in the General Assembly are, to say the least, desirable.

We look back with satisfaction at the very fruitful discussions which took place in the General Assembly last session, and in particular at the very important resolutions which were passed. We should like particularly to express our satisfaction once more at the resolution adopted by acclamation in the First Committee and in the General Assembly on 17 October 1963 (A/RES/1908(XVIII); ENDC/116), which welcomed the expression by the great Powers of their intention not to station in outer space any objects carrying weapons of mass destruction.

We should like also to express our very deep satisfaction at the further modifications to the Soviet draft, as described by Foreign Minister Gromyko on 19 September 1963 (A/FV.1208, provisional, p.71), which now provides for the nuclear umbrella to be retained until the end of the third stage. It is our sincere hope that this further Soviet amendment, which now makes negotiations on this most important aspect of nuclear disarmament more possible and which is made largely in response to Western criticisms, will receive the serious consideration and response which it justly deserves.

(Mr. Obi, Nigeria)

There is hardly any need to stress that a solution of the problem pertaining to nuclear delivery vehicles, and the relevant verification arrangements, are indispensable to any genuine progress in our main task of elaborating a treaty on general and complete disarmament. Therefore we look forward to a serious and businesslike discussion of this and other measures in a spirit of accommodation, with the parties concerned providing the necessary clarification, on the one hand, and evaluating the measures for all they are worth, on the other. While it is true that we have made limited achievements in the field of collateral measures, it is a sad commentary on our work that up to this moment no agreement of any note has been reached on any aspect of our main task of general and complete disarmament.

As the Committee is aware, in addition to the above resolution, various other resolutions were passed at the General Assembly. I will not waste the time of the Committee by describing any of these resolutions, but I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to two of them. The first is resolution 1910(XVIII) (ENDC/116), relating to the urgent need for the suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests, which, inter alia --

"Requests the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament to continue with a sense of urgency its negotiations to achieve the objectives set forth in the preamble of the Treaty;"

As the Committee is of course aware, the objectives referred to relate to a comprehensive treaty including underground tests.

The second resolution to which I should like to draw the particular attention of the Committee is General Assembly resolution 1909(XVIII) (ibid.), on the question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons, which, inter alia --

"Requests the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament to study urgently the question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons and to report to the General Assembly at its nineteenth session".

(Mr. Obi, Nigeria)

We do not yet know what arrangements are envisaged by the co-Chairmen for the realization of these directives of the General Assembly, but we are confident that suitable arrangements will be made in due course. For our part we pledge ourselves to contribute our modest quota and to direct our energies towards realizing the tasks assigned to us by the General Assembly. Meanwhile we are happy to note that a comprehensive test ban, which would include the banning of tests underground as well, remains the objective of the nuclear Powers, not only as stated in the preamble of the Moscow Treaty (ENDC/100/Rev.1) but as expressly stated in the messages of President Johnson both to Chairman Khrushchev (ENDC/119) and to this Committee (ENDC/120). We have always believed that a limited test-ban treaty, though significant in itself, is by no means the end of the road as far as we are concerned. The need for such an agreement becomes somewhat more urgent when reputable scientists appear to feel that underground tests are not as free of x radioactive fall-out and debris as was hitherto presumed.

On the second question, that of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons, we hope there will be some serious discussion. We are not, of course, unaware of the opposition in some quarters to such a conference. The usefulness of the conference and convention have been called in question. As we have stated frequently, we regret that we cannot subscribe to such a view. We think such a conference and convention would be very useful -- that is, if the nuclear Powers that have such weapons participate.

We are meeting in an improved international climate which is both a result and a catalyst of the détente generated by the Moscow partial test-ban Treaty. As my delegation observed on 1 August 1963 while hailing the Moscow Treaty and the direct communications link agreement (ENDC/97):

"... perhaps their chief value ... lies in this: that the agreement on a direct communications link was the first indication of life in the somewhat statuesque though imposing positions hitherto maintained by the two sides; and that the partial test ban is the first tentative step towards the experiment in international coexistence which my delegation has always advocated." (ENDC/PV.149, pp.8,9)

We are happy to observe evidence that the thaw not only has been maintained but is being promoted; and I have noted with satisfaction the United States decision,

(Mr. Obi, Nigeria)

recently announced by President Johnson, to close four of its plutonium piles and to cut down its production of fissionable material by 25 per cent as well as reducing its military budget for the current fiscal year. We have noted also with equal satisfaction the decision of the Soviet Government to reduce its military spending by about 4 per cent and its promised review of its military situation, with a possible reduction of its armed forces later (ENDC/PV.157, pp.13,14).

These are modest but nevertheless significant beginnings, and as such we warmly applaud them. But in so doing we feel constrained to point out, albeit most humbly, that the further perfection of newer and more deadly weapons continues apace, though perhaps not at the same rate as hitherto, and that, even with these reductions in military spending, the vast sums appropriated for military purposes are still not only staggering but vastly out of proportion to requirements for peaceful times and to provisions for peaceful purposes not only for developing countries but also for the super-Powers themselves. Nevertheless, we welcome these modest beginnings and the unilateral efforts at disarmament and reduction by mutual example made by the nuclear Powers, and, while hoping that they will be vigorously promoted and reciprocated, we trust that it will be possible to sanctify them by more formal commitments in the nature of agreements at the appropriate time.

As the Committee is aware, we from Nigeria have always called, both in this Committee and in the General Assembly, for a freezing and reduction of military expenditures, which with all due respect I will call not only immoral but almost criminal folly in a world ravaged by hunger, disease and want and plagued by technological backwardness. Therefore we look forward to more substantial reductions of military expenditures by the great Powers particularly, though this is not to be restricted to them alone; and we look forward to the time when the vast sums now appropriated to military purposes will be channelled to more peaceful endeavours.

(Mr. Obi, Nigeria)

In this connexion, I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to the most important resolution sponsored by Nigeria, the United States and the Soviet Union in the Second Committee and eventually adopted both by that Committee and by the General Assembly at its last session, relating to the conversion to peaceful needs of the resources released by disarmament. This resolution, inter alia --

"Expresses the hope that the Governments of all States will intensify their efforts to achieve an agreement on general and complete disarmament under effective international control, with the desire to realize the benefits for mankind to which the Declaration on the conversion to peaceful needs of the resources released by disarmament is addressed."

(A/RES/1931 (XVIII)).

As this is a very important document which has considerable bearing on our work here, I shall be grateful if the Secretariat would have it circulated as a Conference document.<sup>1/</sup>

We have now met for well-nigh two years, and, although our performance is somewhat better than our more pessimistic critics expected, it is far from being near phenomenal. Indeed, if the truth be told, we are to be congratulated more for the mere promise which we seem to hold out than for any actual achievement. Up to this moment not a single bomb has been destroyed or a single delivery vehicle dismantled or converted to peaceful purposes, nor has a single soldier been demobilized, as a result of any agreement arrived at here. We still have, as at the opening of the Conference in 1962 -- two years ago -- a formidable catena of collateral measures which we have yet not only to agree upon but even to discuss. We say this not necessarily as a criticism but to place our achievements in their proper perspective and, if possible, to spur us to more vigorous efforts. There is great need for improving upon the limited agreements already arrived at during the latter part of last year. The time is long overdue for the confidence reposed in us by our well-wishers to be realized. Like Everyman in the mediaeval morality drama, our good deeds are as yet too weak to sustain us at our reckoning. We should therefore enlarge on those deeds and exploit all the possibilities offered by the almost self-generating détente.

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<sup>1/</sup> Circulated as document ENDC/122.

(Mr. Obi, Nigeria)

There is no time like the present. We are heartened by the hopeful sounds emanating from the two super-Powers since the beginning of this year and at the opening of the Conference last Tuesday. We trust that these will soon be more than mere sounds, because, as President Johnson said in his message and as Mr. Tsarapkin said on 21 January, it is high time that we started acting instead of talking about action.

It would appear to my delegation that some of the measures proposed by the two sides show considerable common ground. We believe the time is now opportune for a formal agreement on the "freezing" and reduction of military budgets. We are not unaware of the arguments adduced by some about the differences in the accounting procedures and economic systems of the parties primarily involved. We grant that it may be difficult, but we refuse to believe that that obstacle, if indeed it be real, is insurmountable. There would be no better demonstration of seriousness of purpose than formally to agree to freeze the military budgets and to make substantial reductions in them.

There would also appear to be considerable common ground in the packages proposed by the two nuclear sides in respect of measures to prevent war by surprise attack and so on. We believe that the Committee could concentrate on this with profit and see if the unwrapping of those packages would not yield some fruit.

An agreement to prevent the further proliferation of nuclear weapons is an ever-obvious necessity, and every moment of delay increases both the difficulty of reaching such an agreement and the danger that more countries will acquire control of those weapons. As it is, we have great difficulty in dealing with the present nuclear monster. The hydra-headed monster which would result if a non-dissemination agreement were not reached would daunt us more if not overpower us, and we have no Spenserian magic weapons to aid us in our fight. We should therefore address ourselves more seriously to this task by concentrating upon it and upon the other promising measures in as orderly a manner as possible, to see whether the desired accord could not be reached. We feel that these three measures appear to offer some prospect of early agreement, and therefore we should tackle them in a realistic and orderly manner in our discussions this session.

(Mr. Obi, Nigeria)

We have a duty to humanity to move forward and to achieve something substantial this year. We have a duty to match the progress made by science and technology with a corresponding political maturity, for, as the late President Kennedy declared at the United Nations on 20 September 1963:

"Never before has man had such capacity to control his own environment -- to end thirst and hunger -- to conquer poverty and disease -- to banish illiteracy and massive human misery. We have the power to make this the best generation of mankind in the history of the world -- or to make it the last." (A/PV.1209, provisional, p.28).

Mr. LUKANOV (Bulgaria) (translation from Russian): First of all, allow me to welcome you, Mr. Chairman, as the leader of the delegation of your peace-loving country in the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, and also our new colleagues the representatives of the United Arab Republic, the Romanian People's Republic, Mexico and India, and to wish all of you fruitful activity.

The Bulgarian delegation also wishes to express its full agreement with the view, which appears to be unanimous, that the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament is resuming its work in much more favourable conditions than previously. One might say that hardly any other body entrusted with such a responsible task as that of working out a treaty on general and complete disarmament has had better conditions than those existing now as we start our work.

To begin with, we have no lack of instructions or directives. The last session of the United Nations General Assembly addressed to our Committee five resolutions (ENDC/116, 117), which have been deposited here by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. Besides the specific tasks assigned to us by those resolutions, they once again point out to us categorically and with the utmost clarity the main goal set before our Committee. Indeed, in almost every one of those resolutions, whatever specific questions they dealt with, the General Assembly never failed to point out to us that the Committee's main objective is to reach agreement on general and complete disarmament.



(Mr. Lukanov, Bulgaria)

The delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria fully shares the conviction of the General Assembly (A/RES/1908 (XVIII)) (ENDC/116) that "... general and complete disarmament under effective international control is the surest safeguard for world peace and the national security", and that "... mankind demands with increasing urgency that decisive measures be taken towards the realization of that goal". Therefore, when the General Assembly "... calls upon the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament to resume, with energy and determination, its negotiations on general and complete disarmament" (ibid.), the Bulgarian delegation considers that recommendation to be an imperative mandate given to us by the 113 States Members of the United Nations.

There can be no doubt that those statements and recommendations correctly reflect the profound conviction and clear realization of the overwhelming majority of States that our Committee must concentrate its attention on the most important and urgent problem of our time: general and complete disarmament, and must redouble its efforts to bring about a decisive improvement in the negotiations on this problem.

It has been rightly pointed out that 1963 prepared for us to some extent a more favourable international atmosphere. Assertions, which were being spread not so long ago, that agreement between East and West were altogether impossible have been completely refuted. On the contrary, it has been proved that such agreements, including agreements on complex questions like the cessation of nuclear tests, are quite possible. In 1963 the will of the peoples to live in peace and their desire to consolidate peace and to struggle to avert a third world war were expressed still more strongly.

At the resumption of our work there have been many new positive initiatives. We now have messages, statements and proposals from the most responsible leaders of the great Powers, upon which the maintenance and consolidation of peace depend in the first place. It is impossible, however, not to agree with the view expressed here that the more favourable atmosphere for our work at the beginning of 1964 increases our responsibility. The easier it is to achieve positive results in our work, the more difficult will it be to justify ourselves in the

(Mr. Lukanov, Bulgaria)

eyes of the peoples if we fail to achieve positive results, if our work advances with excessive slowness, and if we mark time as, unfortunately, has happened in our previous activities.

Let us take as an example the most important question facing us at present -- the question of preparing a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict international control. We must note that there are favourable changes in the presentation of this question as well. We all agree that in an era of rocket and nuclear weapons this has become the main issue. We consider correct the observation that this is a question affecting vitally important national interests. That is undoubtedly so. But can we consider that the importance of this problem, or even its complexity and fateful significance, must necessarily make it a difficult problem necessitating an unjustifiably long time for its solution? When the most vital national interests are affected, then, in behalf of those interests, it is necessary to expedite a solution -- in this case, a solution of the question of general and complete disarmament. There is no doubt that the national interests of all peoples without exception demand the establishment of a reliable, stable and permanent peace throughout the world.

If we are again to hear in our midst arguments on the need for restoring confidence among States as a prerequisite for facilitating and speeding up an agreement on general and complete disarmament, would it not be more correct to turn first of all to the lessons of history and then reply to the question whether weapons can be of any help at all in establishing confidence among States? It is half a century this year since the First World War began. It is well known that that war started in the conditions of a uniform social and economic system in the main States of that time, and that that did not prevent the war from breaking out. In this same year it is twenty-five years since the beginning of the Second World War, which also started as a war between States with a uniform social and economic system, but that, again, did not prevent the war from breaking out. There is no doubt that this hard lesson of history points, first of all, to the necessity of eliminating weapons, without which neither the first nor the second world catastrophe would have been possible.

(Mr. Lukanov, Bulgaria)

As regards confidence among States, may we be allowed to reiterate once more our deep conviction that confidence would of necessity flow from the general assurance that no one would be able to cause harm to anybody else because it would be physically impossible to attack other people with arms: that is to say, that in a disarmed world the question of confidence or mistrust among States which had only weapons for maintaining internal order would simply not exist. If we speak of mistrust, with which the world of today is filled, it is those who are filled with mistrust towards others who should be the first to strive to bring about disarmament — that is, a situation in which nobody could harm anybody else for the simple reason that there would be no means of harming anybody.

If we consider this question from a formal point of view, the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament has also everything necessary for successful work: it has at its disposal draft treaties on general and complete disarmament (ENDC/2/Rev.1; ENDC/30 and Corr. 1, and Add.1 and 2 and Corr.1). In many cases particular provisions of the drafts submitted to us come close to each other. This has happened mainly as a result of a series of concrete concessions made by the Soviet Union in connexion with disarmament measures for the first stage in the field of conventional armaments, in the field of the levels of armed forces, and so forth. In other cases the differences are not insurmountable, as, for instance, on time limits or the numerical strength of armies.

Furthermore, we now have proposals which weaken certain well-known arguments put forward by the debating countries. The nature of these proposals is such that it may lead to mutually-acceptable solutions to some of the key problems of the programme of general and complete disarmament, if goodwill and the desire to achieve agreement are manifested by all the countries. I refer to the draft treaty submitted by the delegation of the USSR at the beginning of our Committee's work in 1962 (ENDC/2), and the new compromise proposal which the Soviet delegation submitted at the last session of the United Nations General Assembly providing for

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the retention of the so-called "nuclear umbrella" until the end of the disarmament process (A/PV.1208, provisional, p.71). This proposal renders groundless the Western Powers' objections in connexion with the elimination of the means of delivery of nuclear weapons and the elimination of the nuclear danger in the initial stage of the disarmament process. Everyone who has had the possibility of following the lengthy discussions on that problem in our Committee can be sure of this. All the fears and objections expressed by the Western delegations could now be easily removed. The result of this would be the reaching of agreement on an exceptionally important question in the field of nuclear disarmament.

The Bulgarian delegation holds the view -- and the discussions at the eighteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly have shown that many countries share it -- that the Soviet Union's proposal opens up to the Committee an extremely favourable opportunity to bring about a radical change in the negotiations on general and complete disarmament, which is now justifiably expected by everyone in connexion with the more favourable international atmosphere. We have not yet heard from the Western Powers whether they agree or disagree with the latest Soviet proposal, nor have we heard any rejection of it, or any evidence that, for some reason or another, it does not suit them. In any case the Soviet proposal should be discussed with the greatest attention, and we have no doubt that our Committee will devote to it all the necessary time and attention. We hope to hear the opinion of our colleagues of the Western delegations on this most important question, and we should like to believe that their opinion will be positive. This will enable the Committee to set about preparing a treaty on general and complete disarmament in a more resolute manner.

I should like to emphasize once more the following:

The Bulgarian delegation regards the preparation of a draft treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict international control not only as the most important and essential part of the work of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, but also as a realistic and feasible task. No other questions, however useful they may be, should deflect us from accomplishing that task.

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whose armed forces are in direct contact at the most sensitive points in the world.

It has been recognized, therefore, that the conclusion of such a pact would be very useful and would create a much better atmosphere and conditions for reaching other agreements, and first of all for the conclusion of a treaty on general and complete disarmament. Hardly anyone of us will claim that such a pact should be concluded in our Committee. The greater part of the so-called "collateral measures" which we are discussing and shall continue to discuss here are of such a nature that their adoption is not possible within the framework of the Eighteen-Nation Committee. The same applies, with no less reason, to a treaty on general and complete disarmament.

But our Committee has the task and the mandate of working out draft agreements on all those questions. The Committee would fulfil that task if it discussed the substance of, and worked out, a draft pact of non-aggression between the aforesaid two military groups. For this purpose there has been placed at our disposal a draft treaty which we can and should consider, approve as a draft, and recommend to all the States concerned. Therefore the argument that the Eighteen-Nation Committee is not a suitable forum for the discussion of this question should be withdrawn; because, as we have said before, the same argument can be put forward in regard to all "collateral measures", as well as in regard to the whole of the work of our Committee.

The delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria would like to welcome as a good omen for 1964 the decision of the Soviet Government to reduce its military budget, and the readiness of the Government of the United States to do the same in its own country. Both Governments of the great Powers have shown a good example in the field of curbing the armaments race which might well be imitated. That example gives us hope that the Eighteen-Nation Committee will in the near future be in a position to recommend, as collateral measures, the reduction of military budgets and the reduction of armed forces, as well as other measures for lessening the danger of the outbreak of an armed conflict, and in particular the danger of the outbreak of a nuclear war, through the creation of nuclear-free zones, including zones in Central Europe, Northern Europe, the Mediterranean and the Balkans.

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Of course, we realize the usefulness of reaching agreement on other questions as well, including those which in themselves do not relate to disarmament, because those questions might help, first, to reduce tension in international relations; secondly, to avert or at least to reduce the risk of an armed conflict breaking out; and, thirdly, to speed up the solution of the problem of general and complete disarmament in an improved political atmosphere.

Any agreement which would help us to achieve general and complete disarmament is to be welcomed. At the beginning of this session the Soviet delegation listed (ENDC/PV.157, pp.13 et seq) a number of such possible agreements with which we fully concur. The United States delegation (ENDC/PV.157, pp.7 et seq), and President Johnson in his message to our Committee (ENDC/120), have also indicated a number of similar measures. We note with satisfaction that some of the proposals of the two great Powers coincide. This in itself is a guarantee that in the near future the Eighteen-Nation Committee will be able to propose to the world new steps towards improving the world situation. We do not intend at the present stage to enumerate all these "collateral measures" according to their degree of importance. Obviously it would be more correct to start with those that are most prepared and ripe for solution. Perhaps in the course of our work there will be established, with the help of the Committee's co-Chairmen, a procedure for the consideration of these proposals.

We hope, in particular, that the United States delegation will agree to the discussion at the present session of such an important proposal as that of concluding a non-aggression pact between the Warsaw Treaty States and the NATO States (ENDC/77). So far we have not heard a single valid objection to the substance of this proposal. On the other hand, in public opinion (and even among prominent political leaders) in all countries, including those in the West, this proposal, as is well known, is meeting with ever-increasing support. In the communiqué (ENDC/101) adopted by the three great Powers which were the initiators of the Moscow Treaty they undertook to work towards a positive solution of this question --that is, the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between the two largest military groups in the world and the only possessors of nuclear weapons,

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Where nuclear weapons are concerned, the Bulgarian delegation cannot agree with the view that such weapons could be given to those forces which do not now possess them, under the cloak of so-called "multi-nationality". At present four great Powers possess these weapons. We think mankind is now faced with the important task of ensuring that nobody uses these weapons, that in the near future nobody should possess them, that their manufacture should cease, that they should be destroyed, and that nuclear energy should be used for peaceful purposes. In no case should these weapons be disseminated where there are not any at present. No "multi-nationality" can justify the dissemination of nuclear weapons or their being made available to anyone else.

Since at the outset of our discussion some delegations dealt with the question of the procedure and method for the future work of the Committee, the Bulgarian delegation reserves the right to speak in greater detail on these important questions in due course. Procedure, of course, is very important for our work, but it can also delay it. In any case, to transform the Eighteen-Nation Committee into a body spending most of its time discussing technical details which have not been called for by previous agreement in principle cannot be regarded as useful. We hope that proposals in this regard will take into account this unquestionably correct statement.

The Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament has started its new session under conditions which enable it to set about fruitful work. 1964, which has just started, will be a year of useful peaceful beginnings, such as the forthcoming World Conference on Trade and Development. The peoples of the whole world have welcomed the New Year in with the noble initiative of the greatest fighter for peace, N.S. Khrushchev, with his proposal to eliminate war as a means of settling territorial disputes between States. In Bulgaria the Soviet Premier's proposals have met with full approval.

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The Bulgarian public greeted with deep satisfaction the decision expressed by the President of the United States, President Johnson, to continue in international relations the policy which the late President Kennedy made so many efforts to establish - a policy aimed at improving the international atmosphere.

Our people are deeply convinced that the principles of peaceful co-existence, on which the foreign policy of the socialist countries is based, will meet with ever-increasing recognition. This is a pre-requisite for achieving substantial and lasting results in the struggle of the peoples for disarmament and peace.

We members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament should also make every effort to help our own Governments and all other governments of the world to find as speedily as possible a practical way towards a stable peace.

The Conference decided to issue the following communique:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 159th plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the Chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador A. Agedo, representative of Ethiopia.

"Statements were made by the representatives of Romania, Nigeria and Bulgaria.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 28 January 1964, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.